

*This polytypic lower montane forest species is endemic to the northern Central Andes and western slope of the East Andes in Colombia; widespread deforestation in the lower Cauca and middle Magdalena drainages mean that since the early 1950s all records come from southernmost Antioquia and northern Caldas.*

**DISTRIBUTION** The White-mantled Barbet is a polytypic species (comprising three subspecies) of the lower Cauca and middle Magdalena drainages, where it occurs on both slopes of the northern Central Andes (including Serranía de San Lucas), and the western slope of the East Andes, Colombia. In the following account, coordinates, unless otherwise stated, are from Paynter and Traylor (1981).

Records of the nominate subspecies are from the following localities: (*Bolívar*) Volador (c.7°58'N 74°15'W; on the eastern slope of Serranía de San Lucas), where two males and three females (in USNM) were collected at 790 m during May 1947 (Graves 1986); (*Antioquia*) Puerto Valdivia (7°18'N 75°23'W; at 180 m on the eastern side of the lower Cauca valley), presumably above which a female (in AMNH) was collected in December 1914 (see Ecology); Valdivia (7°11'N 75°27'W; on the western slope of the north-western Central Andes), where three birds (in BMNH, ROM) were taken at 1,160 m in March 1897, with three males and a female taken at 1,205 m during May 1948 (Salvin 1897, Graves 1986; specimens in USNM); and La Frijolera (c.7°10'N 75°25'W; on the western slope of the Central Andes), where two males and two females (in AMNH, ANSP, MCZ) were taken at 1,525 m in December 1914.

The subspecies *carrikeri* has been recorded as follows: (*Antioquia*) Botero (6°32'N 75°15'W; in the northern Central Andes on the río Porce), where nine birds were taken at 1,095 m during August and September 1950 (Graves 1986); and (either this race or *extinctus*) río Bizcocho (6°18'N 75°02'W; at 1,000 m in San Rafael municipality: Acevedo-Latorre 1971), where specimens were taken at an unstated time (Serna 1980); Jaguas Dam, San Rafael, where three birds were seen at 1,600 m in May 1989 (L. G. Olarte *in litt.* 1992); Punchina Dam, San Carlos (c.6°11'N 74°58'W), where a total of eight birds were recorded at 1,200 m up until April 1991 (P. Velásquez *per* L. G. Olarte *in litt.* 1992); and Cocorna, where a bird was recorded at 1,400 m in February 1992 (P. Velásquez *per* L. G. Olarte *in litt.* 1992).

The subspecies *extinctus* is known from the following localities: (*Antioquia*) Río Claro Natural Reserve, where there have been several recent sightings presumably attributable to this race (F. G. Stiles *in litt.* 1991); (*Caldas*) Hacienda Sofía (= La Sofía, 5°38'N 75°04'W; on the eastern side of the middle Central Andes), where two males and two females were taken at 1,130-1,145 m during May and June 1951 (Graves 1986; specimens in USNM); 3 km west of La Victoria (c.5°19'N 74°55'W; 21 km north-west of Honda), where birds (presumably this subspecies) were seen at 925 m in May 1990 (P. Kaestner *in litt.* 1992); Tasajos (apparently near the previous locality), where presumably this subspecies was seen in May 1990 (F. G. Stiles verbally 1991, P. Kaestner *in litt.* 1992); (*Cundinamarca*) Carmen de Yacopí (= Yacopí, c.5°30'N 74°20'W; at 1,415 m on the western slope of the middle East Andes), where a bird (in AMNH) was taken in August 1914; and (*Tolima*) within 30 km west of Honda (5°12'N 74°45'W; presumably very close to the previous two localities), where two males and a female were collected at 1,525 m during February and March 1907 (Graves 1986; specimens in AMNH).

**POPULATION** Chapman (1917a) considered this species to be one of the most distinctive forms of the Cauca and Magdalena valleys, and the evidence from the specimens collected during and prior to 1914 suggests that it may have been at least locally common (see above): numbers of specimens collected during the late 1940s and early 1950s also suggest this to have been the case (see above; also Hilty and Brown 1986). Despite this apparent previous abundance, the White-mantled Barbet has been poorly recorded during recent decades: S. L. Hilty (*in litt.* 1986) mentioned that the bird is now rare and local; and Graves (1986) suggested that any remaining populations would be insular and isolated, and named the race *extinctus* in the belief that it had already disappeared. Recent observations by the río Claro, Antioquia, and in two separate patches of remnant forest near La Victoria, Caldas, indicate *extinctus* still exists, and that the subspecies may well be reasonably common (locally), albeit in an increasingly small area of remaining habitat (F. G. Stiles *in litt.* 1991, P. Kaestner *in litt.* 1992). Recent records from further north in Antioquia (between San Rafael and Cocorna (see Distribution) also suggest that the species is still locally not uncommon.

**ECOLOGY** The White-mantled Barbet has been recorded almost exclusively between 790 and 1,600 m

(see Distribution), although the specimen (in AMNH) taken at Puerto Valdivia was labelled as coming from 110 m; Puerto Valdivia is at 180 m (Paynter and Traylor 1981), and this bird was presumably taken on the steep slopes rising behind the town. This barbet inhabits lower montane (foothill) humid forest, and has more recently been recorded in areas with a patchwork of forest, coffee plantations, and pasture, and in “badly cut over forest” (Graves 1986, L. G. Olarte *in litt.* 1992). The recent observations in Caldas have come from a patch of forest c.20 ha in size on a steep slope (P. Kaestner *in litt.* 1992), and in both secondary and heavily disturbed forests (F. G. Stiles *in litt.* 1991). Birds have been recorded in mixed-species flocks, foraging in the forest canopy, but also visiting isolated trees (*Cupania* sp.) in pasture c.50 m from the forest edge (Graves 1986, P. Kaestner *in litt.* 1992, F. G. Stiles *in litt.* 1992). The secondary forest patches where this barbet was recorded between San Rafael and Cocorna were all dominated by *Cecropia* trees in which the species was observed feeding (L. G. Olarte *in litt.* 1992). Graves (1986) noted that one bird was collected amidst large clumps of mistletoe in a tall tree, although information on specimen labels (in AMNH) suggests that the main food sources are insects and seeds. Birds in breeding condition have been collected from the end of May until early September, with an immature taken at the end of August (Graves 1986; specimens as in Distribution).

**THREATS** The middle and lower Magdalena and Cauca valleys have been heavily deforested since the nineteenth century, and the clearance of the floodplain and foothills of the middle Magdalena valley has almost been completed during the last 30 years (Graves 1986). That the subspecies *extinctus* still exists is perhaps due to the fact that a small area of remnant forest (albeit in patches) has survived on a very steep escarpment near to La Victoria (P. Kaestner *in litt.* 1992), although at río Claro, Antioquia, birds seem to be able to survive in secondary forest (F. G. Stiles *in litt.* 1991). It is possible that the White-mantled Barbet has undergone a historic range loss of greater than 50% due to habitat destruction, and the fragmented state of the remnant lower montane humid forest suggests that remaining populations are insular and genetically isolated (Graves 1986).

**MEASURES TAKEN** Forested watersheds in some municipalities may provide some protection for local populations, as shown by observations at La Victoria (F. G. Stiles verbally 1991). The forest surrounding the Jaguas and Punchina dams are supposed to be protected by the local electricity company (ISA) (L. G. Olarte *in litt.* 1992), and the bird has also been found in the small (80-100 ha) Río Claro Natural Reserve (see equivalent section under Antioquia Bristle-tyrant *Phylloscartes lanyoni*), although the status of this reserve is unknown, and is in an area undergoing heavy logging activity (L. G. Olarte *in litt.* 1992).

**MEASURES PROPOSED** It is essential that remnant lower montane forest areas in the northern Central Andes (including the Serranía de San Lucas) are afforded some form of protection (see equivalent section under Chestnut-bellied Hummingbird *Amazilia castaneiventris*). An assessment of status and distribution of these remnant forest patches (and of the species) must be a priority, but the ecological needs of the White-mantled Barbet remain poorly known and require urgent attention, particularly with reference to how well the species survives and reproduces in suboptimal habitats. A sizeable forested area (c.1,000 ha) near Florencia (between río Claro and La Victoria: F. G. Stiles *in litt.* 1992) should be searched for the presence of this and other threatened species (see below), and protected in some way. Any conservation initiatives in the range of this bird should consider the requirements of the other sympatric threatened species (see equivalent section under Chestnut-bellied Hummingbird and Antioquia Bristle-tyrant).